

FSA Scientific Advisory Committee Recruitment Process

Equal Opportunities

We welcome applications from all sections of the community. All appointments are based on merit and the principles of independent assessment, openness and transparency of process.

The completion of the monitoring questionnaire is encouraged. Please note the information will be used for monitoring purposes only and it will be presented in the form of totals from which individuals cannot be separately identified.

The purpose is to ensure we do not create any barriers in our selection process and to help us implement our equal opportunities policy effectively.

Disability Confident Interview Scheme

The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equal opportunities. We run a Disability Confident interview scheme for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria for the job.

To be considered for an interview you must:

- have a disability [defined by the Equality Act 2010](#)
- provide evidence in your application that you meet the minimum criteria in the job description
- meet all of the qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential.

The application form will ask if you want to apply under the Disability Confident scheme.

At the interview, you will be given the opportunity to demonstrate your abilities and you will be marked solely on merit.

If you need further assistance with your application or would like to request reasonable adjustments to enable you to perform effectively at application or interview, please [contact us](#).

Application Process

Each application will be acknowledged by email when received. If you have not received an acknowledgement of your application by the closing date, please [contact the team](#).

Please also read the '[How to Apply](#)' page before completing your online application.

Your application will be assessed and sifted against the criteria laid out below. All of your information will be processed in line with the FSA Data Protection Policy and the Data Protection Act 2018.

We will let you know by email whether or not you have been shortlisted for interview. If there is a high volume of applications, we may be unable to provide individual feedback.

Interview Process

An email inviting you for interview will be sent out at least two weeks before interviews will be held. The interview will be your opportunity to elaborate on the information provided in the application form. A range of questions will be asked to allow you to demonstrate to the selection panel that you have the qualities and experience required. Interviews will be held virtually using Microsoft Teams. Information on how to join will be sent out prior to the interview.

Each candidate will be considered very carefully and the reasons for decisions noted. Records are kept in line with the FSA Data Protection Policy.

The Decision

Once all candidates have been assessed, the panel will make recommendations for appointments for those judged to demonstrate the closest match with the published criteria.

When agreement is reached regarding the candidates recommended for appointment, letters are sent out inviting the candidates to become members of either the committees or expert groups. Candidates are requested to accept, in writing, their appointment to the groups.

Raising Concerns

If you feel your application has not been treated fairly, and you wish to make a complaint, you should email SACrecruitment@food.gov.uk

If you are still dissatisfied and would like to take your complaint further, please follow our [complaints procedure](#).

Sifting and Interviewing Criteria

Applicants are required to meet the following to progress to interview:

- Two scores of 4 or higher, one of which must be in criteria 1.
- At least a score of 3 in all of the other criteria.

Lay members will be scored using the same scoring system as other committee members. However, consideration will be taken that lay members can be non-experts, who may contribute to the work of the SAC through their understanding of the broader context of the SAC's work, or by representing the broader community potentially affected by the SAC's advice. For a description of all membership types please see our [overview page](#).

Scoring Criteria

Chairs

1. A high-level of expertise in an area specific to the committee applied to, evidenced by a strong record of achievement at a national or international level, with strong networks in the field.
2. Leadership abilities, sound judgement, an excellent track record in the assessment and interpretation of scientific data.
3. Able to contribute to the formulation and delivery of advice to the Board of the Food Standards Agency.
4. Have excellent communication skills and be aware of relevant food safety issues.

Members

1. Evidence of expert knowledge and experience in one or more of the required expertise areas for the committee(s) you are applying for, evidenced by a good record of achievement at a national or international level, with good networks in the field.
2. Experience of and contribution to multi-disciplinary groups advising on complex scientific or technical questions.
3. Strong analytical and judgement skills – Evidence of being able to integrate information, think independently and be open to challenge.
4. Well-developed interpersonal and communication skills with a collaborative style and an ability to engage and communicate with non-expert audiences.

For Science Council applications these two extra criteria must be met

5. A breadth of expertise and networks with experience spanning disciplines relevant to the FSA.
6. Informed perspective on the interests of consumers and citizens and experience of how these interests can be reflected in the work of the Council

Scoring Guide

Score	Description	Definition
1	Criterion not demonstrated	<p>The candidate has provided insufficient evidence that relates to the issues being explored.</p> <p>The evidence does not clearly explain their understanding of the points associated with the issues.</p>
2	Minimal demonstration of criterion	<p>The candidate has provided some evidence that relates to some of the issues being explored.</p> <p>In the main, the evidence explains their understanding of some of the points associated with these issues</p>
3	Acceptable demonstration of criterion - meets criterion	<p>The candidate has provided evidence that directly relates to the issues/area being explored.</p> <p>The evidence clearly indicates their understanding of some of the points in this area.</p>
4	Strong demonstration of criterion	<p>The candidate has provided strong evidence that directly relates to the issues/area being explored.</p> <p>The evidence clearly indicates their understanding of the many points in this area.</p>

5

Outstanding demonstration
of criterion - exceeds
criterion

The candidate has provided very strong
evidence that directly relates to the
issues/area being explored.

The evidence clearly indicates a high level
of understanding of the many points in this
area.